

Licensing and Public Safety Committee

Wednesday, 10 December 2008

Present: Councillor Iris Smith (Chair), Councillor Edward Smith (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Doreen Dickinson, Anthony Gee, Pat Haughton, Catherine Hoyle, Hasina Khan, Marion Lowe, Thomas McGowan, Debra Platt, Ralph Snape and John Walker

08.LPS.20 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Judith Boothman, Magda Cullens, David Dickinson, Keith Iddon and Stella Walsh.

08.LPS.21 MINUTES

RESOLVED - That the Minutes of the meeting of the Licensing and Public Safety Committee held on 17 September 2008 be confirmed as a correct record subject to an amendment on the resolution for minute 08.LPS.16, delete 'objectives' insert 'objections'.

08.LPS.22 REVIEW OF HACKNEY CARRIAGE VEHICLE LICENCES (UNMET DEMAND)

With reference to Minute 08.LPS.17, the Committee received from the Licensing Manager notification that the independent survey to establish whether there was any unmet demand for additional hackney carriage vehicle licences had now been received from Transportation and Planning International Ltd.

A full report would be submitted to the next meeting of the Committee on 3 February 2009 but Members noted that the report was not supporting any change to the current situation and that it was unlikely that any changes would be made.

RESOLVED - That as the report was detailed and lengthy, a small group of Members from the Committee meet with Officers to examine the conclusions and recommendations.

08.LPS.23 LICENSING AND REGISTRATION - SUMMARY OF ACTIVITY FROM 2 SEPTEMBER 2008 TO 31 OCTOBER 2008

The Committee received a report from the Corporate Director (Governance) on the various licenses and permits issued, regulations effected and enforcement activity by the Licensing Section between 2 September and 31 October 2008.

RESOLVED - That the report be noted.

08.LPS.24 LICENSING OF LIMOUSINES - PROCEDURES AND CONDITIONS

The Committee received a report from the Corporate Director of (Governance) on proposals on the procedure and conditions of licensing for stretched limousines.

The report indicated that in recent years there had been a rapid growth in demand for the hire of limousine vehicles and prior to the introduction of this policy the industry had been largely unlicensed and unregulated, with neither drivers nor vehicles being licensed. Chorley Council had licensed vehicles and drivers using officers discretion

to determine the application and this proposed policy would provide a transparent and consistent framework for the licensing of limousines and had been drawn up in accordance with the guidance of the Department of Transport outlined in their publication 'Taxi and Private Hire Vehicles Licensing – Best Practice Guidance'.

The report set out the pre-licensing requirements and licensing conditions.

RESOLVED - That the proposals for the procedure and conditions of licensing of stretched limousines as set out in the report be approved for consultation, prior to recommendations being submitted to a future meeting of the Committee.

08.LPS.25 PRIVATE HIRE VEHICLE VEHICLE PLATE EXEMPTIONS-CONDITIONS OF LICENSING

The Committee received a report from the Corporate Director of (Governance) that enabled Members to consider proposed private hire plate exemption conditions and policy.

The report set out the current practice regarding the issuing of private hire plate exemptions. This was at the discretion of the licensing enforcement officer and the licensing manager. There was no written Council Policy or other guidance on private hire vehicles plated exemptions.

Those vehicles hired under contract lasting not less than seven days were exempt from private hire licensing and therefore were not required to display a private hire plate. On 28 January 2008 Section 53 of the Road Safety Act came into force which repealed the contract hire exemption, effectively bringing more vehicles into the scope of private hire licensing. Since the legislation under Section 53 of the Road Safety Act came into force there had been a significant increase in the number of private hire vehicle operators asking for private hire vehicle plate exemptions, these include operators of stretch limousines and vehicles being used for contract work.

The report set out the exemption from displaying plates notice conditions and the corresponding policy for their issue.

RESOLVED - That the proposals for the conditions for plate exemption for private hire vehicles as set out in the report be approved for consultation, prior to recommendations being submitted to a future meeting of the Committee.

08.LPS.26 DEMOCRATIC SERVICES OFFICER

The Chair informed the meeting that this was the last meeting that Gordon Bankes, the Democratic Services Officer, was attending as he was taking early retirement from the authority.

The Chair and Members of the Committee thanked him for his assistance and advice he had given to the Committee and wished him well for the future.

08.LPS.27 LICENSING SECTION

The Committee received from the Licensing Manager an appraisal of the work of the Licensing Section throughout the last twelve months. He outlined the achievements and gave an overview of the work of the section, providing an effective and efficient team in the administration of the issuing of licences. The next twelve months would see an increase in officer training and a rise in the profile of the section, as well as an effective integration into the Neighbourhood Directorate.

Chair